



# PROJECT BUMBLE BEE



## PROJECT BUMBLE BEE

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### LUCKY CHARMS TO HELP PROMOTE BEE CONSERVATION IN MADISON COMMUNITY

MADISON, Wis. - Lucky Charms will collaborate with the Xerces Society and local organizations to support research and conservation for bees through Project Bumble Bee. Representatives from Lucky Charms are gathered with members of the Madison community to celebrate a new partnership with Middleton-Cross Plains Area School District and the Pheasant Branch Conservancy.

Lucky Charms values sustainable food sourcing and is concerned about the impact the company has on the environment. According to Saskia Van Riessen, Brand Manager for Lucky Charms, research shows that the work bees do in pollinating plants plays a significant role in one out of every three bites of food the public eats, but now face a significant decline due to habitat loss, pesticide use and climate change.

Engaging the Madison community is just another way Lucky Charms has demonstrated its commitment to responsible and sustainable practices across their supply chain. They joined the Supplier Ethical Data Exchange in 2014 and have implemented a Supplier Code of Conduct to ensure all Lucky Charms suppliers abide by the same responsible practices.

"We're incredibly excited to be working with the Middleton-Cross Plains Area School District and the Pheasant Branch Conservancy," said Van Riessen. "At Lucky Charms, we know that natural and sustainable sourcing occurs at a local level. We're happy to be doing anything we can to help educate the community about how important that is."

General Mills will devote \$1 million to feature Project Bumble Bee in a series of commercials for Lucky Charms, one of its most popular cereals. The company will also sponsor public service announcements to raise awareness of the project and teach the public what they can do help with bee conservation. They will also donate \$100,000 to Project Bumble Bee to help restore bee habitats and ensure that General Mills suppliers are using natural fertilizers and pest control options.

For more information on the project, visit [www.xerces.org/bumblebees](http://www.xerces.org/bumblebees) or [www.generalmills.com](http://www.generalmills.com).

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# PROJECT BUMBLE BEE BACKGROUND

## **XERCES SOCIETY**

The mission of the Xerces Society, a nonprofit organization established in 1971, is to “protect wildlife through the conservation of invertebrates and their habitat.” The organization works to protect and raise awareness about endangered species and educate farmers on how to best manage their land to protect the habitats of these species. In the forty years that the organization has been around, The Xerces Society has restored and created 120,000 acres of new habitats, educated more than 26,000 people nationwide on the issue through workshops and seminars and secured the habitats of rare species. The organization has a formal partnership with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and this partnership supports a team of biologists who “provide pollinator related technical support to the agency nationwide.”

## **PROJECT BUMBLE BEE**

The Xerces Society has created a number of different programs that work towards their mission of protecting invertebrates and their habitat, and supports the research and conservation of bees through Project Bumble Bee. Project Bumble Bee was created in response to the decline of several bumble bee species that were once abundant and important in pollination for crops in their regions. Because of poor management practices, habitat alteration or destruction, pathogens and the use of pesticides, wild bumble bees face the threat of extinction. Research has found that when multiple bumble bee species go extinct, the abundance of insect pollinated plants declines, which includes crops such as tomatoes, peppers and blueberries. It is estimated that in the United States the pollination services provided by insects, primarily bees, is worth \$3 billion per year.



**GENERAL MILLS CEO KEN POWELL**

## **GENERAL MILLS & GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY**

General Mills stresses the importance of being a responsible food company, and we are proud to be able to say that we’ve donated over \$151 million to charitable causes in 2014, and over \$1.5 billion since 1954. In addition to the \$100,000 General Mills will be donating to Project Bumble Bee, General Mills has already donated \$1 million to the Xerces Society since 2011 to support pollinator and biodiversity efforts. Several of General Mills’ consumer brands have already taken part in the effort to improve biodiversity, including Honey Nut Cheerios, Nature Valley and Cascadian Farm. Lucky Charms is excited to be the newest brand to promote the Xerces Society and Project Bumble Bee. The money donated from General Mills will be used to expand bee-safe farming education, reduce the impact of pesticides on bees, and help farmers provide safe habitats for bees on US agricultural land. General Mills manufactures a number of products that use ingredients that require pollination, so ensuring the health and abundance of bees is a priority for our company.

For more information, visit [Xerces.org](http://Xerces.org) and [GeneralMills.com](http://GeneralMills.com).



# PROJECT BUMBLE BEE FACT SHEET

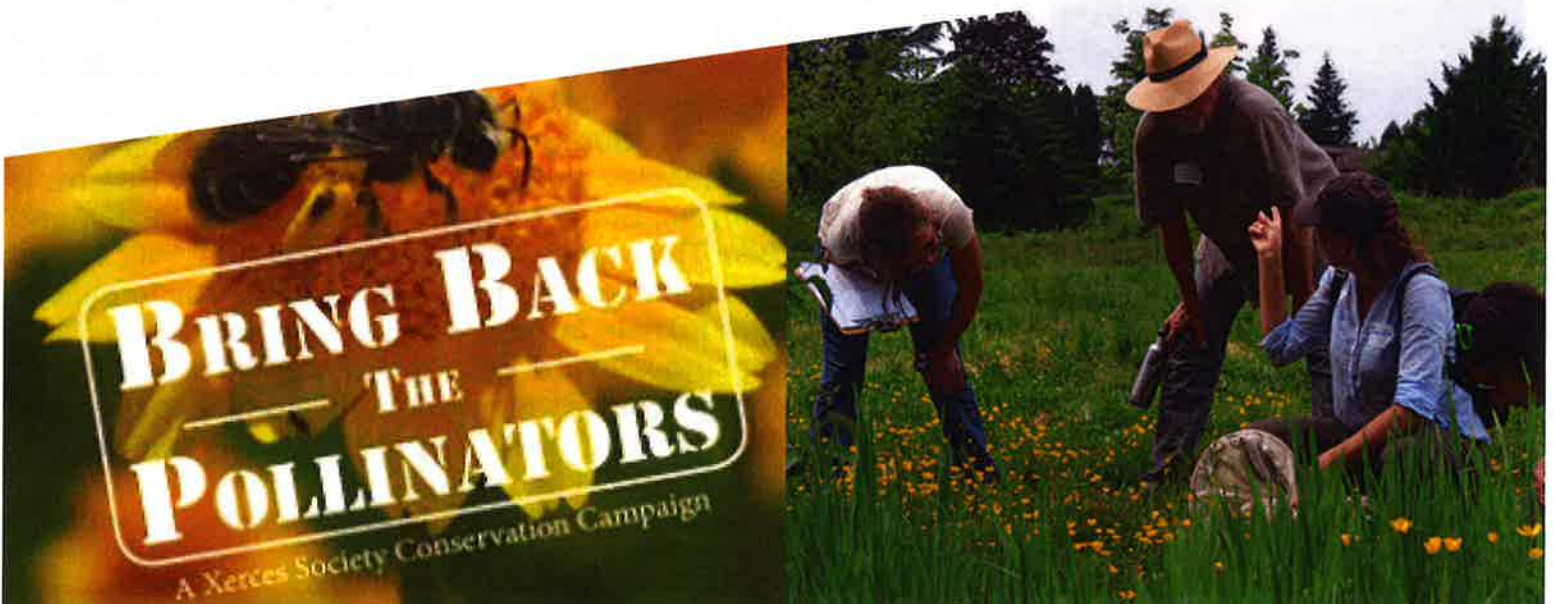
## PROJECT BUMBLE BEE\*

- Project that supports research and conservation for bees and their habitat.
- Run by the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, a nonprofit organization from Portland, Oregon.
- Project funded by the Oregon Zoo.
- Implemented in the late 1990s after bee biologists started to notice a decline in the abundance and distribution of several wild bumble bees.
- Wild bumble bees face many threats including habitat alteration, pesticide use management practices and pathogens.
- Five of these species (western bumble bee, rusty patched bumble bee, yellowbanded bumble bee and the the American Bumblebee) were once very common and important crop pollinators over their ranges.
- The Xerces Society recently launched a collaborative citizen science project called Bumble Bee Watch to track these and all over North American bumble bees.

## GENERAL MILLS PARTNERSHIP WITH PROJECT BUMBLE BEE

- General Mills will devote \$ 1 million to help with bee conservation, such as planting particular wildflowers.
- General Mills will also donate \$100,000 to Project Bumble Bee to help restore bee habitats and ensure that farmers who supply General Mills are using natural fertilizers and pest control options.
- Lucky Charms representatives are gathered in Madison, Wisconsin, to announce the involvement of the Middleton-Cross Plains Area School District and the Pheasant Branch Conservancy in Project Bumble Bee, modeling their efforts on work done at the University of Wisconsin-Madison Arboretum.
- Lucky Charms will feature Project Bumble Bee in a series of commercials for its cereal and sponsor public service announcements to raise awareness of the project and teach consumers about what they can do to help with bee conservation.

*\*information provided by the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation*



# PROJECT BUMBLE BEE TIMELINE



**Establishment**  
of Xerces Society  
in 1971.



**First Annual**  
meeting of  
the Xerces  
Society was  
in 1974.



**Late 90s,**  
experts  
observe  
decreases in  
several wild  
bumble bee  
populations.



**In 1995, Yellow-**  
**banded bumble bees**  
make up 93% of the  
northern Wisconsin bee  
population. **By 2010**  
they constitute only 1%  
of the wild bee  
population.



**2004-2008: Franklin's**  
**Bumble Bee** is monitored  
by UC-Davis researcher  
Dr. Robbin Thorp. In 2006,  
Thorp observes only a  
single Franklin's Bumble  
Bee.



**24 representatives**  
from agricultural orgs  
convene at UW-Eau  
Claire to examine  
conservation efforts to  
protect bees,  
butterflies and other  
pollinators.



**2012: Bring Back the**  
**Pollinators Campaign**  
encourages people to  
reduce pesticide use  
and talk about  
conservation in their  
communities



**General Mills**  
begins its work  
with the Xerces  
Society and UC-  
Davis  
researchers to  
support bee  
conservation  
efforts in 2014.



**Lucky Charms**  
partners with the  
Xerces Society to  
support research  
and conservation  
for bees through  
Project Bumble  
Bee and their  
Middleton-Cross  
Plains Area School  
District.







# PROJECT BUMBLE BEE Q & A

## WHAT IS PROJECT BUMBLE BEE?

Project Bumble Bee is an effort created by Xerces Society to help preserve bee species. Some species of bees are going extinct and their habitats are being destroyed. This is a 'collaborative citizen science project' to bring awareness of the importance of bees for society.<sup>1</sup>

## WHO IS XERCES SOCIETY?

General Mills is teaming up with Xerces Society. Xerces Society is a nonprofit organization that originates in Portland, Oregon. The organization has dedicated the last 40 years to preserving invertebrates and the environment.<sup>2</sup>

## WHY ARE BUMBLE BEES IMPORTANT?

According to Clemson University, bumblebees are the main pollinators of wildflowers and crops. This nourishment provides food for animals and mankind. Unlike other species of bees, bumble bees can also pollinate severely better than other species of bees in unfavorable conditions.<sup>3</sup>

## HOW IS THE COMMUNITY INVOLVED?

General Mills is adding Middleton-Cross Plains Area School District and the Pheasant Branch Conservancy to the number of communities involved with Project Bumble Bee! The community can contribute to the rigorous research behind the project by submitting

sightings of bee's nest or certain species of bees in the community to the Xerces website. General Mills and Xerces Society will also bring awareness to the community about tips to help the bees by planting wildflowers beneficial to the bumblebees.

## HOW MUCH MONEY IS GOING TOWARDS THE PROJECT?

General Mills will spend \$1 million to the campaign as well as donate \$100,000 to Project Bumble Bee.

## HOW WILL THIS MONEY BE USED?

To generate awareness for Project Bumble Bee, General Mills will dedicate the campaign to a series of commercials for Lucky Charms and sponsor public service announcements. The donation directly from General Mills will go towards Project Bumble Bee's efforts towards restoration and preservation of bee habitats. They also ensure the General Mills agricultural suppliers use pest control options, like natural fertilizers.



1. <http://www.xerces.org/bumblebees/>

2. <http://www.xerces.org>

3. [http://www.clemson.edu/extension/beekeepers/factsheets/bumble\\_bees\\_as\\_pollinators.html](http://www.clemson.edu/extension/beekeepers/factsheets/bumble_bees_as_pollinators.html)